

NEWSLETTER

PSA SPRING 2026



HEADTEACHER'S MESSAGE

Spring has been a vibrant and enriching term at Pioneer Secondary Academy, with students engaging in a wide range of academic, cultural, and wellbeing-focused activities. From World Book Day and International Women's Day to student leadership in Mental Health Awareness and Safer Internet Day, our community has continued to thrive.

Thank you to our staff, students and families for your continued support in making our school such a dynamic and inclusive school community.

WELCOME NEW STAFF

We are delighted to welcome Mark Merimikwu, who joins us as Associate Assistant Headteacher, overseeing Attendance and Behaviour alongside Ms Lallian and Ms Summerell. He brings a strong track record of improving standards across very successful London schools. You may see him at drop-off or pick-up, please do say hello. We also welcome Muhammed Butt and Saidhbh Flanagan to further strengthen our Inclusion Team.

UNIFORM REMINDER

Due to the warmer weather, students may leave blazers at home on particularly hot days. However, as always, shirts, ties, trousers and skirts must be worn correctly at all times. A smart and appropriate uniform is essential in promoting pride, a sense of belonging, and high expectations, ensuring all students present themselves respectfully and are ready to learn. Please take a moment to review the important letter sent to parents last week regarding uniform.

KEY DATES

Mon 30 Mar	30 March – 14 April 2026 Easter Holidays
Wed 15 Apr	All students return
Fri 17 Apr	Vaisakhi programme
Mon 20 Apr	20 April - 23 April Language speaking exams
Fri 24 Apr	Year 8 HPV Immunisations
Wed 29 Apr	Junior Maths Challenge
Thu 30 Apr	30 April - 1 May Art Exams
Mon 4 May	Early May Bank Holiday
Mon 11 May	11 May - 19 June Summer exams 11 May - 15 May Year 7, 8, 9, 10 Assessments (in class)
Mon 25 May	Spring Bank Holiday 25 - 29 May Summer Half Term

EVENTS AT PSA

Safer Internet Day and Mental Health Awareness Week

With Safer Internet Day and Mental Health Awareness Week falling in the same week, it was a busy and inspiring time at Pioneer Secondary Academy!

Our assemblies began with the School Council leading an important session on mental health awareness, centred around the theme "This is My Place."

This was followed by an engaging LMI (Labour Market Information) assembly delivered by Mr Gill, who shared valuable insights into the local job market in Slough. Students participated thoughtfully, asking insightful questions about their future career pathways.

The session also linked to Safer Internet Day, exploring the impact of AI and the future of work.



International Mother Language Day

During the week commencing 23 February, we celebrated International Mother Language Day, recognising and honouring the rich linguistic diversity within our school community.

To mark the occasion, students delivered short presentations during spiritual assemblies. It was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate identity, heritage, and the many voices that make Pioneer Secondary Academy such a vibrant and inclusive community.



World Book Day

To celebrate World Book Day, our English Department organised a range of activities, bringing the joy of reading to life across the school.

Students began the day with a Masked Reader challenge, where teachers recorded themselves reading extracts from their favourite books using digital masks and voice changers. Students then tried to guess which teacher was behind each disguise.

Year 7 students also took part in a door decoration competition, transforming classroom doors into creative displays inspired by different books and genres.

The day also included whole-school DEAR and WRITE moments (Drop Everything And Read and Write), encouraging everyone to pause and enjoy reading together.

Well done to all our students for getting involved, and to our amazing staff for putting together such a memorable day.



International Women's Day

Our week began with inspiring sessions for all students delivered by our guest speaker Richa Puri, renowned Medicine Practitioner & Prescribing Pharmacist, who focused on the powerful theme of "Give to Gain." Students then took time to reflect and wrote heartfelt cards to the special women in their lives who inspire and support them every day.

We ended the week with a celebration in the school marquee, bringing students and staff together to recognise and celebrate the achievements and impact of women around the world. Our students fundraised for Unique Charity in India by selling baked goods, keyrings and hot chocolate. As a result, they raised an incredible £1,000!

A huge well done to everyone involved.



PSA WELCOMES

Windsor Forest Colleges Group

We were pleased to welcome The Windsor Forest Colleges Group to Pioneer Secondary Academy.

Our Year 11 students attended an informative assembly exploring a range of post-16 pathways and opportunities available at BCA, Slough and Langley College, Strode's College, and Windsor College.

We also appreciated the opportunity for parents and carers to attend a coffee morning, where post-16 options were discussed and questions answered in a supportive environment.



Buckinghamshire Council: "Hooked"

We were delighted to welcome visitors from Buckinghamshire Council, who delivered a powerful performance focused on the dangers of vaping and cigarettes.

The session combined education with drama, creating an informative, engaging, and thought-provoking experience for our students. Following the performance, students had the opportunity to take part in a Q&A, asking questions and deepening their understanding of the risks associated with vaping and smoking.

Thank you so much to the team for visiting us and delivering such an impactful session for our students.



Dr Helen Munro-Wild and her team: the BootStRaP Study

We were honoured to welcome Dr Helen Munro-Wild and her team from the BootStRaP Study at the University of Hertfordshire to Pioneer Secondary Academy.

We are proud to be one of just ten schools participating in this important research project, which is exploring how young people use the internet and identifying the risk indicators associated with harmful or problematic online behaviours.

The Europe-wide BootStRaP study monitors how teenagers interact with the internet through a specially designed mobile app that gathers anonymous information about patterns such as time spent online, types of platforms accessed, and how digital habits relate to wellbeing and mental health. This groundbreaking research will help experts better understand which online behaviours may lead to harm and how young people can be supported to develop healthier and safer digital habits.

It was a fantastic opportunity to share our work and contribute to research that will help inform future guidance, policy and support for young people navigating the digital world.

Thank you to Dr Helen Munro-Wild and her team for visiting and for the important work they are leading.



SPECIAL GUESTS

S. Jarnail Singh

S. Jarnail Singh completed his Slough show at Pioneer Secondary Academy as part of The Siyane Kehnde Ne Tour – “The elders spoke... and we learned.”

The evening began beautifully with our students playing instruments to help create a devotional and peaceful environment.

S. Jarnail Singh then delivered a powerful and engaging session, blending humour, storytelling, and timeless Punjabi wisdom. His words encouraged reflection across generations, offering meaningful insights that resonated with children, parents, and elders alike.

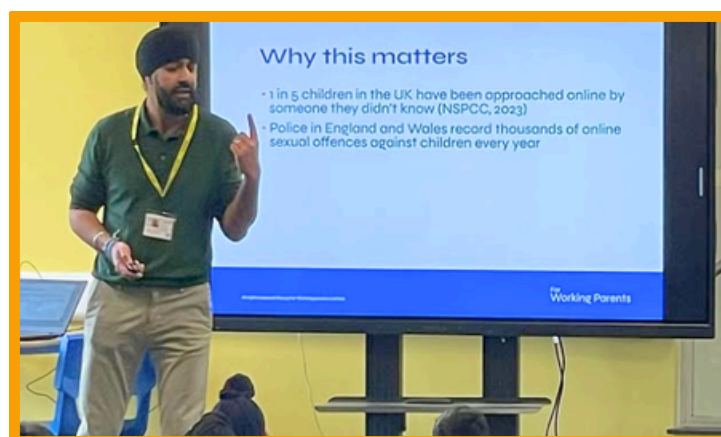
It was an evening full of thoughtful moments and learning - a reminder of the importance of listening, reflecting, and learning from lived experience.



Amit Kalley

A huge thank you to Amit Kalley, Digital Parenting Expert and co-founder of For Working Parents for holding this important workshop on online grooming for Pioneer Secondary Academy and Khalsa Primary School parents and carers.

This free workshop provided valuable insight into how grooming happens, why young people can be vulnerable, and how building strong, open relationships at home can support children's safety online.



PSA ACHIEVEMENTS

Intermediate Maths Challenge

The Maths Department celebrated another fantastic year in the Intermediate Maths Challenge. Across our Year 10 and 11 top sets, students achieved an impressive 22 Bronze, 5 Silver, and 1 Gold awards.

A special congratulations to Nihaal and Muizz, who achieved joint best in the year. And an outstanding well done to Sher, who achieved best in the school and has qualified for the next round in March.

Buckinghamshire Model United Nations

A group of our students recently represented Pioneer Secondary Academy at the Buckinghamshire Model United Nations Conference.

Throughout the conference, our students demonstrated excellent diplomacy, engaged confidently in debates, listened respectfully to others, and contributed thoughtfully to discussions.

They represented the school with maturity, confidence, and professionalism, bringing great credit to our community. We are incredibly proud of their efforts and achievements.



Hot Chocolate with the Headteacher

Hats off to our outstanding students who went above and beyond, earning 15+ merits in a week! To celebrate, they got together in the canteen to receive their £10 Cash Voucher and hot chocolate with freshly baked cookies. Congratulations!



Slough Schools Dodgeball Event

Ten of our Year 8 students proudly represented our school at the Slough Schools Dodgeball event, held at St Bernard's.

They demonstrated fantastic teamwork, determination, and sportsmanship throughout the competition. Well done to everyone who took part for representing our school so brilliantly.



Wrestling Festival at Singh Sabha Sports Centre

On 10 March 2026, a group of our students had the opportunity to attend a Wrestling Festival at Singh Sabha Sports Centre, where they took part in a series of exciting and challenging activities designed to introduce them to the sport of wrestling.

The festival was led by Olympian and international wrestler Oksana Rakhra, who worked directly with the students to demonstrate key wrestling techniques and skills. Students learned a variety of safe grappling movements, balance techniques and partner drills, developing strength, coordination and teamwork throughout the session.

During the festival, students rotated through different activities including balance and control drills, partner grappling exercises, technique demonstrations and small challenge games where they could apply the skills they had learned.

The event provided a brilliant opportunity for students to experience a new Olympic sport while also learning about the discipline, respect and resilience that are central values within wrestling.

Our students represented the school extremely well, showing great enthusiasm, determination and teamwork throughout the day. Many students stepped outside their comfort zone to try new skills and supported each other during the partner activities.

English National Wrestling Championship 2026

We are proud to celebrate the achievements of our students who recently competed in the English National Wrestling Championships, held in Kettering from 31 January to 1 February.

Competing against participants from wrestling clubs across England, with over 400 athletes taking part across the two-day event, our students performed exceptionally well. Gary achieved a Silver medal in the 48kg category, while Hershpreet secured a Bronze medal in the 42kg category - an outstanding accomplishment at national level.

This was their first experience competing at a national competition, making their success even more impressive. The students qualified for this event following strong performances at the Southern Region Championships in December.

We are incredibly proud of their dedication, determination, and the way they represented the school.

YOU MAY ALSO BE INTERESTED IN...

Viva Slough Boost Programme

Viva Slough have been leading healthy living, eating and exercise classes out of Wexham Parish hall and St Marys Church in the high street. If you would like to attend, please see the information with times and locations below:

- Wexham Parish Hall - Daytime physical activity session from 1pm - 2pm
- Wexham Parish Hall - Evening physical activity session - 6pm - 7pm
- Slough High Street - Mondays and Thursdays physical activity sessions from 12pm - 1pm at St Mary's Church
- Live Well and Eat Well - Thursdays 11am - 1pm - Wellbeing and Nutrition classes - Wexham Parish Hall



Wishing all who celebrate a very happy Easter. We hope you have a restful break, and we'll see you when we return on Wednesday 15 April.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about ONLINE TRENDS ENCOURAGING VIOLENCE

7 out of 10 teens report seeing violent content on social media, with over half of that content featuring fights involving young people. Most don't 'seek' it but are shown it through social media feeds or messaging groups. 91% of young people involved in violence have seen violent social media content. Viral trends, challenges, or 'wars' that are spread online risk encouraging violence offline, while real-world incidents may also be recorded and promoted online.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

ALGORITHMIC EXPOSURE

Social media platforms are designed to keep users engaged, meaning dramatic or extreme content can spread widely and quickly. Algorithms often recommend content that reflects users' past interactions. As a result, young people may see more violent material if they have viewed, commented on, or shared it before. Repeated exposure can make violent content appear frequently in their feeds without them fully understanding why.

WEAPONS AND CRIMINAL RISK

Teens exposed to high levels of real-world violence on social media sometimes report feeling an increased need to carry a weapon for 'self-protection'; however, carrying a weapon increases the risk of victimisation (harm and injury by others) for young people. In addition, carrying a weapon is a serious offence that can lead to police arrest and a criminal record.

SHARING VIOLENT CONTENT

Encouraging or assisting an offence is a crime in the UK, including via social media, and can lead to arrest. This means sharing, forwarding, or reposting violent content carries a risk for young people too. Showing examples of content to a trusted adult is appropriate, but young people should take care not to further spread violent material by posting it online or sharing it within large messaging groups.

FEAR, ANXIETY, AND MARGINALISATION

Research shows young people's emotional wellbeing can be negatively impacted by repeated exposure to violent online content, especially when it depicts 'real-world' violence (as opposed to fictional depictions in games or films). Posts featuring weapons, threats, attacks, and fights – or content that appears to glamorise gang activity – can increase feelings of anxiety or fear among young people. Material that encourages violence targeting people because of their identity, such as their nationality or religion, can also create disproportionate harm for children belonging to those groups.

AVOIDANCE AND ISOLATION

Real-world violence on social media can increase young people's belief that their local communities – or the 'outside world' more generally – are unsafe places. This can result in avoidant and isolating behaviours, which may negatively affect their wellbeing. As well as feeling fearful of others, teens also report feeling judged for spending time together in large groups, which may affect their social interactions and leisure time.

Advice for Parents & Educators

STAY INFORMED

Stay alert for updates from police, schools, or local authorities, and follow the advice provided. Be cautious about unofficial accounts, fake content, and misinformation, which can spread quickly online or in chat groups. Ensure you get accurate information from trusted sources and encourage young people to do the same. Remind them never to share violent content online and to speak to a trusted adult instead.

DISCUSS SOCIAL MEDIA

Encourage young people to talk about the content they see online and the effect it can have. This can be an opportunity to discuss topics such as misinformation, AI-generated material, the attention economy, and algorithms, helping them understand how and why extreme content can spread online. Explore tools available to block, report, and remove harmful content, and signpost where to get support and advice, such as [reportharmfulcontent.com](https://www.reportharmfulcontent.com).

TALK CRIME AND SAFETY

In most of the UK, the age of criminal responsibility is 10 (12 in Scotland). This means there can be serious criminal consequences for carrying a weapon, taking part in violence, or filming or sharing violent content. Discuss the law with young people alongside practical safety strategies. Ask questions such as: "What could you do if you feel unsafe?" Work together on action plans and remind them they can contact a trusted adult or the police if they witness or experience violence.

ENCOURAGE POSITIVE ACTION

Focus on strengthening young people's positive experiences both online and within their local communities. Discuss strategies to reduce negative social media effects, such as time limits, unfollowing certain accounts, or taking breaks from apps. Encourage offline activities such as spending time with friends, visiting local places, and taking part in hobbies that bring them joy, purpose, and connection. Remind them they can seek support with any concerns at any time via [childline.org.uk](https://www.childline.org.uk).

Meet Our Expert

Dr. Holly Powell-Jones is the founder of Online Media Law UK and a leading UK expert in media law, online safety, and young people. Her PhD investigates youth understandings of criminal and legal risks in a digital context. She works in schools to provide award-winning education on the criminal, legal, and ethical considerations of rapidly advancing technologies.



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